

York University

Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies

Internationally Educated Professionals Bridging Program

Reflection Paper

FINAL VERSION

In Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Course

ADMS 3015 - Professional Communication in a Canadian Context

By

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My goal for this course was accomplished. My paradigm was shifted and I am looking communication differently if compared with the beginning of the course. I learned the tools to communicate in a Canadian context. I am concluding it with the feeling that I am prepared to communicate better as professional and individual. As a team member, we finalized the course project in a good level and each team member gave his or her contribution for the team success. I truly believe that each member's knowledge, practice and skills on communication were expanded.

Communication is the process by which information is exchanged between a sender and a receiver. Effective communication conveys the right message, to the right person, in the right way and at the right time. Audience is everything, and learning to recognize it, it is an important key for effective communication. The last assignment was to prepare a project and choose a relevant topic to IEP students. I was assigned to participate in the management group and apply the knowledge acquired during the course. We worked in the project entitled Emotional Intelligence (EI) focusing in its importance and the reasons why IEP managers have to relate and respond to it into a Canadian workplace. So the topic added value for IEP students because of its importance on how affectively they can manage themselves and their relationships. As our team had different background, it was a great opportunity to enhance each one's experience, and demonstrate how emotional intelligence (EI) related to our experiences.

I naturally assumed the position of the leader of the group because I was more familiar with the EI topic. EI and successful leadership are a passionate topic which I have invested my readings, and also researched in order to learn more about them. Thompson (2014) states that "Great leaders are always learning" (p.20). Goleman (2013) affirms that for "Leaders to get results they need three kinds of focus: inner focus, other focus and outer focus. Inner focus

attunes us to our intuitions, guiding values, and better decision. Other focus smooths our connections to the people in our lives. And outer focus lets us navigate in the larger world” (p.4).

We explored EI as an important skill for IEP managers because they need to be aware of how to manage different emotions in the workplace either demonstrated by individuals or teams. We highlighted that EI is also a compound of attributes that distinguish the qualities that most managers should have. Moreover, we emphasized that IEP students need to know and develop the EI component in their professions.

We had five team members. The advantage is that we had more heads thinking cohesively about the project, team’s goals and expectations. The disadvantage was that we had only few meetings face-to-face with all the members; however, we compensated this challenge through informal conversations, class meetings, emails and text messages communication. Obviously the participation, engagement and contribution of three members were much more than the other two. In this point I would suggest the groups to be formed at least in the middle of the course, so the team members could have more time to work in the project. Anyways, in one way or the other we could assemble the parts, work together, socialize, reduce conflicts, receive each ones contribution and achieve the team’s goals.

This course was a great experience. According to the course guidelines and the weekly proposal activities, every single task brought its difficulties and challenges by the relevance of the topic. I would say that communication, like swimming, cannot be learned only by reading about it. It has to be practiced. Let me make an analogy. If you ever used weight equipment at a gym, you know that you do not exercise the muscles individually one at a time. Such a specific approach would take forever, and you would not get the results. Your muscles are designed to work in groups. During the course, combining the lectures, assignments and feedbacks, I learned

to do it by practicing. The more I practiced, the better I got and the greater my confidence grew.

The greatest difficulty was to shift my thinking to accommodate too many new ideas while at the same time deal with my cultural background and apply the concepts in a clear, concise, and meaningful ways into the assignments and my own work environment. On the other hand, through the difficulties and challenges I found the opportunities to grow and develop my knowledge and skills as a manager in the role of communicator. This was such a rewarding experience.

I truly believe that the instructions, lectures, examples, exercises, materials, and feedbacks received from Marlene were very important and valuable to the course success. Thanks Marlene for your expertise teaching me this course. According to Drucker, the only way to discover your strengths is through feedback analysis (Drucker, 1999). The Marlene's feedbacks put me in the right direction because they showed my weakness, promoted challenges in my way to think on the message and audience, and helped to evaluate and enhance my knowledge. In other words, this course provoked a change in my way to communicate effectively under the instructor's guidance.

I started the course with a limited level of knowledge and skills in the Canadian context and I finished it with the feeling that, even with some deficiency in the language, my knowledge and skills were expanded. Indeed, I did have goals to achieve; there were evaluations in the assignments because I needed the marks; however, I would say that the stage I am experiencing now is just preparing me for the next phase of my professional life on effective communication in the Canadian workplace. This was the most important thing I learned about during the last 12 weeks.

References

Drucker, P. (1999). *Managing oneself*. Harvard Business Review

Goleman, D. (2013). *Focus: The hidden driver of excellence*. London, UK: Bloomsbury.

Thompson, L. L. (2014). *Making the team: A guide for managers* (5 ed.). Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Pearson Education, Inc.